

Start

January 31st 1957

Dear Gunther:

We are still tingling from the wonderful time we had during our California visit (or is that the -10 weather we've been having?)—the dinner party we had with you and Inga was one of the high points, and we hope not the last of its turn or kind.

Since then, the offer from Genetics has been materializing with astonishing speed and smoothness, and some of the last preliminary difficulties having just lately been cleared up, we really must begin to face a tempting but difficult decision. Madison has been a very congenial place for us, and we have enjoyed the free and easy spirit with which the departmental barriers here are taken. In addition, some prospects of new developments in medical genetics here present a real challenge for leadership.

I don't have to tell you why, on the other hand, we might prefer Berkeley (present company included too). However, a number of people have warned that on account of its very size, the administrative setup at Berkeley is stiffer, and various kinds of cooperations that could be taken for granted here might have to be worked out more studiously. I don't know how true this gossip is, but if we can't work out the same kind of mutual-interest relationships, most of Berkeley's attractiveness as a university will have dissipated. It will help a great deal to know we can rely on such old friends as Roger and Mike, and we will be very disappointed if we can't find a focus of interest with you, on something at least the size of one lambda particle.

One issue that might bear some early thought is the course setup. Although, unlike here, where we have regular interlistings (Genetics 107 = Bacteriology 107 = bacterial genetics) there may be more formalities, Jenkins has made it clear we could work out our own arrangements as we chose. I am expected to teach in the area of 'physiological genetics', but rather than make an independent offering, wouldn't it be better if we could pool our respective resources (you and Ed Adelberg and myself and whoever else is concerned) for a coordinated offering that would cover what is usually given as a hodge-podge of physiological and biochemical and microbial genetics. Possibly excepting Caltech, there is no other university I can think of that has the breadth of resources to do this so well. There are some obvious problems too, such as the level of offering, prerequisites, and so on, but what do you think of the proposal?

This is, of course, predicated on one of three possible outcomes (would you call them abortive infection, lysis and lysogeny?) and our being able to make up our minds instead of going into regenerative oscillation.

I'm planning to revisit Berkeley in early April (for a cytogenetics seminar) directly on returning from CIBA. Hope to see you then.

Yours,

Joshua Lederberg

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